



## Business Objects – A Software Industry Case Study

Today's companies face the daily challenge of aligning and leveraging internal business requirements with ever changing customer demands. The metrics and analytics required to operate more effectively are becoming more critical to navigating these changes. Companies that can better analyze their strategic position will be in a better position to increase market share.

### Business Challenge

Business Objects, a software and services provider, maintains their data in numerous source systems including, but not limited to, PeopleSoft CRM, Salesforce.com, and Vantive software packages. Due to the variation within the data definition and structures, as well as a lack of integration points between systems, only a fraction of this data could be synchronized across the multiple source systems.

As measurements and metrics were formed, different outcomes were generated due to the data naming conventions within each of the different source systems. The various metrics created contained many versions of the truth. The Business Objects internal IT staff did not have the ability to view and consolidate accurate or consistent information regarding customers. Business analysis was extremely difficult and labor intensive to create. This often led to rework and duplication of effort, producing inaccurate demand forecasting, lost customer opportunities, and poor customer experience.

A second challenge was that each distinct internal group owned and managed the customer data across applications, channels, and customer types. Manual processes were created to coordinate and synchronize this data. The mapping from several source systems was extremely complex.

### The Solution

Cardinal Point Solutions was engaged by Business Objects to build a solid customer information foundation. The objective was to embark on a customer data cleansing initiative. First, resolve invalid and duplicate customer data coming from the different source systems. Second, provide the tools and procedures to sustain quality customer data for the future.

An assessment of the current state of customer data and relevant processes was conducted. The required data elements were determined and a single global master customer database was developed. Customer data in its current form was extracted from selected source systems and loaded into a data cleansing staging area. A combination of automated and manual processes were applied to cleanse and transform inconsistent data into a uniform representation of a customer. The new master customer data was then deployed into target systems. A comprehensive, regression testing approach was utilized to validate the complete result and process.

### Business Benefits

- ▶ Improved customer experience, including streamlined opportunity for order to invoice processing for new and existing customers
- ▶ Increased efficiency to accurately identify each customer
- ▶ Improved Business Intelligence through enterprise-wide analytics and reporting
- ▶ Newly established common interpretation of customer and associated data structure across the business, yielding a 360° view of each customer
- ▶ Improved reliability in demand forecasting
- ▶ Increase sales opportunities



*“The technical expertise and advice provided by Cardinal Point helped drive the success of our internal BI Project”*

*– Data Cleansing Project Manager, Business Objects*